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Staffing levels in Irish advertising industry remain at pre-recession levels

The IAPI says that staff reduction hasn't been as bad as feared.

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IRISH BUSINESSES HAVE started to realise the importance of investing in Irish-made advertising in order to resonate with its consumers, a development that has made the industry more confident about the future.

In its first Census report, the Institute of Advertising Practitioners in Ireland (IAPI) noted that despite financial and



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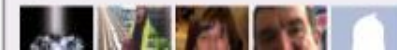
DEVICE

A promotional graphic for "Blue September". The text "Blue September" is written in a large, blue, stylized font. Below it, in smaller black text, is "SPONSORED BY". Underneath that is the logo for "Vhi HEALTHCARE", which consists of the letters "Vhi" in a bold, orange font with a curved line above the "i", and the word "HEALTHCARE" in a smaller, black, sans-serif font below it. At the bottom of the graphic is a blue button with the text "GET THE FACTS" in white, followed by a white circular icon containing a blue "G".

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time pressures, there is a cautiously positive outlook for the future.

“Agencies are positive, hiring and planning on more recruitment,” Tania Banotti, CEO of IAPI, told *TheJournal.ie*. “And those jobs are full-time and well-paid.”

The organisation, which has 43 member companies, was surprised that employment numbers are back to pre-recession levels.

“Almost to the last person, we are the same as we were in 2007,” said Banottie. “Anecdotally, we know there was a big dip but that has come back up again.”

Currently, there are 1,281 people directly employed in the Irish advertising industry across media, creative, full service and digital agencies.

“This indicates more stability than we expected. While some mergers and closures have taken place since the downturn, it demonstrates that staff reduction hasn’t been quite as bad as we feared.”

Banotti believes that while there is an almost 50:50 ratio of men and women in the sector, more work needs to be done to get female workers to the top.

“There is good news that more women are being hired at the start so we will eventually get there but we have a long way to go at CEO and Managing Director level,” she explained.

Women make up 13 per cent of the total at Chairperson/CEO/Managing Partner level, lagging behind the UK which records a 22 per cent rate.

“The Census was great for us to get a handle on where women are in the business because it is skewed in some ways. There are more men in the creative and digital sides, while women are more likely to be found in client and account management areas.”



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Banotti believes that Irish businesses have started to see the value in investing in homemade creative work.

“There is a certain humour and approach that Irish people respond to. The market here is very small – four million people – so it should be hard to make an argument for bespoke work but firms are converting and reverting to it because it resonates more with the audience that the pan-European approach.”

There is also a shift towards more online and social media campaigns.

“Ad agencies don’t have a preference where to place. They follow the eyeballs so it is our job to figure out where people are spending their time – be it television, radio or online.”

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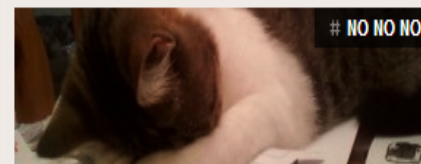
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